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Belgium - Western Europe: Brussels wants the smaller NATO members to have a greater role in determining Western positions on German questions.

The director general of the Belgian Foreign Office asserted on Wednesday that Bonn's "coming of age" was a good thing, but that a coherent NATO-wide policy on German matters was imperative. Belgium, he said, is not prepared to do Bonn's bidding regarding Western policy toward East Germany unquestioningly, nor is it willing to follow blindly the Allies on Berlin questions. Belgium does not want merely to be informed or consulted by the large powers, but desires to be allowed to participate in the drafting of policies. It also supports the idea of a conference on European security in the hope of getting a greater voice in European affairs.

Belgium has long chafed over the pre-eminent role the US, Britain, and France have reserved for themselves on German questions, and over West Germany's role in Western policy formation toward East Germany. In this regard, the Belgian official opposed Brandt's proposal for a Western four-power summit, as well as the alternative idea of a meeting of four-power representatives at the UN General Assembly meeting.

At the same time, Belgium evidently hopes to press West Germany for concessions on European Community issues, particularly monetary harmonization and political coordination. Brussels would hope, through the Communities, to retain some influence over Bonn's direction of movement.

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